State/Union Territory Governments for the development of Domestic Tourism.

(e) and (f). The private sector is already involved in the development of tourism infrastructure for domestic tourism.

[English]

Allocation of Wheat and Rice

1865. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem appearing in 'Indian Express' dated 18 March, 1996 that States like Bengal, Maharashtra, etc. were starving of their allotted quota of wheat and rice resulting in hardhitting suffering to the poorer sections of the population who draw their sustenance from Public Distribution System while nation's granaries in Punjab and Haryana were over-flowing;

(b) the facts thereof, and the names of all the officers of Food Corporation of India responsible for such an acute shortage of essential supplies in various parts of the country; and

(c) the action taken by the Government against these officials?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (c). The newsitem appeared in the Indian Express dated 18.3.1996 was seen by the Government. As the stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool continued to be comfortable, there had been no difficulty in supplying wheat and rice to the States/UTs including West Bengal, Maharashtra etc. for PDS during 95-96. The average monthly offtake of rice and wheat for PDS/RPDS in West Bengal and Maharashtra in year 1995-96 was as under :

(In lakh tonnes)

State	Rice	Wheat	Total
West Bengal	0.37	0.70	1.07
Maharashtra	0.30	0.51	0.81
All India	7.88	4.41	12.29

As against the lifting of rice and wheat indicated above, the stocks held by FCI on different dates were as under :

(In lakh tonnes)

	West Bengal		Maharashtra		All India (Central Pool)	
Date	Rice	Wheat	Rice	Wheat	Rice	Wheat
1.4.95	3.61	0.96	8.04	5.82	180.0	87.2
1.10.95	3.81	1.16	6.51	4.57	130.0	169.5
1.1.96	3.45	0.52	5.46	3.23	154.0	131.5
1.2.96	3.76	0.63	5.35	3.01	160.8	114.9
1.3.96	3.73	0.74	5.48	2.83	161.8	99.4
1.4.96	3.41	0.72	5.32	2.85	141.4	86.0
1.5.96	3.14	0.87	5.38	2.76	137.4	122.4
1.6.96	2.95	1.13	5.02	2.66	135.4	152.3

(All Figures Provisional)

The stocks of rice and wheat in the country stood higher than the requirements for PDS. The same position generally prevailed in Maharashtra and West Bengal. However in January, 96 and February, 1996 the stock of wheat in West Bengal on the first day of the month was a little lower than the average monthly offtake in the state. There were some movement constraints affecting the stock position during a few months after September, 1995 in the Mumbai City and Calcutta Metropolitan Areas. This was mainly due to lesser availability of railway rakes due to heavy passenger traffic in Mumbai Areas and difficulty on the part of Calcutta Port Trust to accept rakes from the Eastern Railways for placement at Jinjra Pool (JJP) godown of FCI in Calcutta Port Trust Area. The situation has improved since then.

In the aforesaid context, there seems to be no scope for fixing responsibility on any FCI officers.

Tourism Offices Abroad

1866. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the number of offices abroad operating for the promotion of tourism;